

For the past five years we have been governed by "Father knows best-ism". And what is even worse, we have been governed by a group for whom maintenance of power is the only real consideration. I do not believe there has ever been in the history of Canada a government more concerned with its own survival than this one. It has shown itself prepared to sacrifice any principle, change any policy, jump in any direction and promise anything it is asked—all since October 30, 1972 when the people of this country clearly declared they were not prepared to accept autocracy in the place of democracy, that they would not accept any longer government by bumbling bureaucrats and heartless technocrats.

The President of the Treasury Board (Mr. Drury) was one of the first to adopt a changed attitude when he announced in December that the supposedly perfect public service bilingual program, in effect, was not so perfect after all. Then, the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Mr. Lalonde) acknowledged the necessity of raising the old age security pension. There are dozens of other examples, not the least of which was the sudden conversion of the Prime Minister on the subject of the monarchy, followed by his dash to London for tea with Her Majesty the Queen. Then, in a discovery worthy only of a Christopher Columbus, the Prime Minister found western Canada after all these years. Recently, he daringly called for "Manitoba Power" in Ottawa. And now, in this budget, this inept government proposes all sorts of things in a last desperate effort to remain in office.

Last fall the Progressive Conservative party called for income tax cuts to stimulate the economy. "Impossible", they said, but now they take a somewhat inadequate step in that direction. "The capital gains tax on the family farm should go" said those on this side of the House. "Nonsense", the government replied. Yet now they say it should be done. The Liberals laughed when the leader of this party said that an inflation factor should be applied to the income tax system. Now, they advocate just such a thing. The pensioner did not need more assistance before election day, but the government suddenly recognizes there is a need.

I recall when this House first met that a member of the opposition suggested a theme for this government called, I believe, "Those Nobodies are a Bunch of Somebodies Now". I should like to suggest as a theme for this government, "What a Difference a Day Makes". Politicians who will turn in any direction in order to maintain power demonstrate all too clearly that the welfare of their own needs is more important to them than the welfare of the Canadian people. It is not very difficult to imagine what would be the fate of this country if a group which operates on such a level of motivation was again ever able to obtain a majority of seats in this House.

As one who was a member of the Liberal party for over 30 years and who served in the executive side of that party on the local, provincial and national levels, I believe I can claim some accuracy in assessing its steady destruction in the hands of those who have controlled its destiny—and unfortunately the destiny of this country as well—since April 20, 1968, a destruction that has proceeded to the point where the so-called Liberal party of today is not even an unworthy shadow of its former self, while

at the same time, as the government of this country, it has utterly failed in its responsibilities to the Canadian people.

When I was a young boy, Prime Minister Mackenzie King came to Leeds to officially open the Thousand Island Bridge with President Roosevelt. The afternoon before the ceremony Mr. King came to Brockville in his private railway car and I remember asking a man at the entrance to the car if I could take the Prime Minister's picture. A few minutes later, to the wonder and delight of a small boy, Mr. King stepped from the car and talked for a while about Canada and how every individual and the problems of every person in this nation were important. It was not rhetoric for a crowd, as he sat for a few minutes on a pile of railway ties and talked about the Liberal party and his hopes for Canada. There was no one there but a small boy. The so-called Liberal government of today is a sad reflection of its predecessors. The individual and the problems of people are no concern except at moments when fear of losing power engulfs this heartless machine. Then, this government, in the traitorous style of a Judas, is prepared to sell what principles it has left for the support of the socialists in a fantastic display of its belief it has a divine right to govern at any cost.

• (1650)

When I asked that man years ago at the entrance to Mr. King's railway car if I could take the Prime Minister's picture, I assumed he was a member of Mr. King's staff. In later years I came to know him when he served nine years in this House as the Liberal member for my riding of Leeds. I refer to one of my predecessors, George T. Fulford of Brockville who is in the gallery today and who, last year, put his country ahead of the Liberal party. He is now a member of the Progressive Conservative party and, like so many former Liberals in Leeds and across Canada, he is working for an end to the folly that calls itself the government of Canada.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Cossitt:** The sense of democracy and the love of the House of Commons so often displayed over the years by the right hon. member for Prince Albert (Mr. Diefenbaker), who is still such a vital presence in the House today, is something this government could never comprehend, let alone emulate.

There must be a return to the days when the individual member of parliament was the link between government and people instead of the regional desks in the Prime Minister's office. The government of Canada must be returned to the House from the Prime Minister's office. There must be an end to persons sitting on the Treasury Benches guided by methods of the technocrat and the autocrat instead of being guided by a feeling and an understanding of people. There must be an end to the financial irresponsibility that has been the most outstanding feature of the last five years.

Since last October, we have been witnessing an effort to cover up the impossible. We are told the Prime Minister is indulging in a new-found love affair with the Canadian people. The latest grey eminence in the Prime Minister's office has promised us that things will be different in the